

**REMARKS**

Favorable consideration and allowance of the claims of the present application are respectfully requested.

In the present Official Action, which has been made final, the Examiner rejected Claims 7, 13-14 and 17 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as allegedly anticipated by Wang (US 6,643,327) (hereinafter “Wang”).

Further, Claims 5, 8-9, and 15-16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over Wang in view of Panusopone et al. (US 6,647,061) (hereinafter “Panusopone”).

The Examiner did object to Claims 10-12 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

In response, Applicants have cancelled claim 7 and independent claim 13 from further consideration in this application and have incorporated the same into Claim 10 (indicated as comprising allowable subject matter). Applicants are not conceding in this application that claims 7 and 13 are not patentable over the art cited by the Examiner, as the present claim amendments and cancellations are only for facilitating expeditious prosecution of the allowable subject matter noted by the examiner. Applicants respectfully reserve the right to pursue these and other claims in one or more continuations and/or divisional patent applications.

With respect to the rejection of Claims 5, 8-9 and 15-16 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a), as allegedly unpatentable over Wang in view of Panusopone, applicants respectfully disagree in

view of the amendments provided herein and by virtue of their dependency upon Claim 10, indicated as allowable.

Claim 17 is canceled without prejudice.

Thus, respectfully, the Examiner is respectfully requested to enter and consider Claim 10, now re-cast in independent form, to include all limitations of its base claim (Cl. 13, now canceled) and intervening Claim (Cl. 7 now canceled) and, to allow these claims to proceed to issuance, which action is respectfully solicited.

In view of the foregoing, this application is now believed to be in condition for allowance, and a Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes a telephone conference might expedite prosecution of this case, it is respectfully requested that he call applicant's attorney at (516) 742-4343.

Respectfully submitted,



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